

**RECEIVED, DISSEMINATED
AND FORWARDED TO ALBANIA**

1. U. S. Position

a. Basic points defining the U. S. position towards Albania are as follows:

(1) Albania should be an independent country with institutions of its own choosing, and friendly disposed towards the West.

(2) No country should enjoy a privileged position in Albania, nor should any country resort to other than peaceful means to settle any outstanding territorial issues with Albania.

(3) Military intervention in Albania by either Great or Yugoslav forces, or both, must be averted since it would create an undesirable situation between these countries and with respect to Italy, and would prejudice the establishment of an independent Albania.

(4) Diplomatic and other (including unconventional) efforts to undermine the present pro-Soviet regime must be continued with a view to the eventual overthrow of the regime.

(5) Should the present regime in Albania collapse or be overthrown by whatever means, the U. S. should insist that the character of the succeeding regime will not be determined by any one outside power, but will be the subject of consultation between the U. S., U. K., Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy, France, and Turkey as the most directly interested parties, or will be settled by an agency of the UN.

(6) Assurance should be secured from Greece, Yugoslavia, and Italy that each will not create a situation which would impede the ultimate establishment of an independent Albania with a government that the non-Communists would regard as freely chosen by the Albanian people.

(7) In the event it becomes necessary to negotiate in a Greece-Yugoslav occupation of Albania, as in time of war, the U. S. will seek to do all that is appropriate to ensure that such occupation (a) shall be temporary; (b) shall cease as soon as military considerations permit; and (c) shall not prejudice the establishment of an independent Albania friendly toward the West.

(8) Unconventional activities directed towards the eventual overthrow of the present regime should not set in motion a chain of circumstances which would endanger the delicate balance between peace and war now existing in the Balkans.

(9) It will be desirable to associate France and Turkey with any diplomatic action arising from the views set forth in subparagraphs (6) and (7) above, without necessarily introducing them into the field of covert activities.

b. A factor limiting American freedom of action in regard to unconventional or covert activities against Albania is an agreement with the British to coordinate policy and overall operational plans in this field. In effect from the inception of the current Albanian program, this understanding makes unilateral U. S. action to upset the Hoxha regime impracticable without prior consultation with the U. K.

2. BRITISH POSITION

a. British views on Albania are, in general, similar to U. S. views, although there is possibly a greater willingness on the part of the U.K. to accept as realistic the idea of partitioning the country between Greece and Yugoslavia in the event of an international military emergency.

b. British aspirations in South-Eastern Europe are likely to reflect themselves in certain differences with the U. S. where matters are involved which may give the U. S. greater relative prestige in that area. This sensitivity on the part of the British toward maintaining a position of equality is a factor that will enter into all activities to which they are a party.

3. SOVIET POSITION

a. Albania provides a foothold on the Adriatic and Mediterranean for the U.S.S.R., and the Soviets certainly desire to keep her in the Soviet Bloc, even though she is an economic liability and a militarily indefensible outpost. Her loss would be damaging to Soviet prestige, but nevertheless the USSR has no mutual assistance pact with Albania, as it has with the other European Satellites (except East Germany). The only Soviet satellite bound by a mutual aid pact with Albania is Bulgaria, and the treaty is so carefully worded as to fit only certain special combinations of circumstances, obviously being designed to apply only when considered desirable by the USSR.

b. The Soviet Bloc has already demonstrated sensitivity and uneasiness over the current situation in Albania, openly accusing the West, particularly the U. S., of organizing provocations against that country. Their attitude toward a coup against the Hoxha government would undoubtedly depend upon the manner and speed with which it is carried out, the reaction of other interested powers, and the global situation at the time. In the event of advance indication that a coup is imminent, the USSR would undoubtedly take preventive action which could range from improved security precautions and liquidations within the country to the dispatch of satellite forces by sea and shore of force on the Yugoslav and Greek borders. Furthermore, the Soviet Bloc would attempt to exploit the

situation so as to create maximum division, suspicion, and mistrust among NATO countries and the free world generally. This type of cold war action would be undertaken regardless of whether the coup were successful or not. (For further details of Soviet position, see Tab F, SE-34.)

4. YUGOSLAV POSITION

a. The Yugoslavs have had what they consider a vital interest in Albania since long before the creation of the present Yugoslav state, and there are historical connections which provide grounds for both rationalized and justifiable claims that Albania properly falls within Yugoslavia's sphere of interests. Because of this historical tie and also for both geographical and practical political and military considerations, Yugoslavia is undoubtedly the major factor in any problem relating to Albania. Specific points outlining Yugoslavia's attitude at this time are as follows:

(1) Yugoslavia desires to achieve some change in the Albanian regime favorable to herself. Ideally, from her point of view, Albania should be an anti-Soviet but pro-Yugoslav Communist State which could eventually be incorporated in the Yugoslav Federation as a People's Republic.

(2) Because of their recent predominance in Albania, their determination to re-establish dominance in any new regime, and their vulnerability to any Soviet or Satellite reaction, the Yugoslavs regard any attempt to overthrow the Hoxha regime as a matter of the greatest concern to their national interests. Should a coup prove successful, the Yugoslavs would make intensive efforts to dominate it; should a coup fail, the Yugoslavs would make every effort to prove that they were not a party to the scheme.

(3) At the present time, Yugoslavia is actively engaged in the development of assets to carry out a Yugoslav-sponsored but ostensibly internal coup. Although the Yugoslavs may feel that precipitating a revolution against the Hoxha regime at this time could create serious dangers to Yugoslavia and weaken her international moral and political position, efforts to build up the strength and prestige of the Yugoslav-supported group within the Albanian emigre movement, as well as their clandestine efforts inside Albania, indicate definite preparations for a covertly or semi-covertly Yugoslav-dominated attempt to liberate the country. Interest in making a satellite of Albania is so great that psychologically they are capable of organizing a coup as soon as the necessary resources are available, regardless of the dangers and complications risked at this time and under the present combination of circumstances.

b. In spite of intensive efforts, the Yugoslavs have been unable to overcome the widespread Albanian suspicion of Yugoslav motives and fear

f. Greece and Italy are regarded by the Yugoslavs as their greatest rivals in Albania. Any Albanian regime giving either of these countries a prominent position would be completely unacceptable and would probably be regarded as worse than the present Soviet-dominated government. Friction with Italy over Trieste will probably strengthen Yugoslavia's determination to prevent the restoration of Italian influence in Albania, and could serve as a possible inducement for an early Yugoslav attempt to effect some kind of readjustment which would assure Yugoslav preeminence.

5. GREEK POSITION

a. Greece has historical interests of long standing in Albania. These are primarily territorial, as she lays claim to the Northern Epirus section of the southern part of the country. This irredentist issue is so packed with emotion that the Greek government finds it difficult to deal forthrightly on the matter and make any pronouncement suggesting Greek acceptance of Albania's present territorial limits. The Greeks would therefore be deeply concerned over any development which might give the Yugoslavs or Italians an advantageous position, and thus endanger Greek claims, and are seriously worried over current Yugoslav activities.

b. If the Yugoslavs were to initiate a coup to the exclusion of the Greeks, the latter would be extremely resentful and would almost certainly endeavor to counteract Yugoslav influence. It is doubtful that Greece would take military action unless a prolonged state of anarchy were to develop, but they would feel betrayed by their Western allies, and their consequent distrust and suspicion could lead to reduced cooperation in joint efforts to improve Western security position in the Mediterranean.

c. In general, Greece would like to see Albania as a non-Communist country in which Greek influence is strong, Yugoslav influence reduced to a minimum, and with the Northern Epirus incorporated within the territorial limits of Greece proper. As a less desirable alternative, Greece would like to see an independent Albania of the type envisaged by the U. S. But if neither of these two possibilities can materialize, she would prefer the maintenance of the present weak regime which, from a short-sighted viewpoint, presents a threat to no one.

d. Greece is active in Albania, but primarily for purposes of espionage and largely in the Northern Epirus region. None of her operations are directed toward the development of facilities to further a revolution. However, there is a political side to her operations in that they rely primarily on groups sympathetic to Greek territorial and ethnological claims respecting Albania.

e. If a coup in Albania were to be carried out under U. S. control without Yugoslav participation in a dominant capacity, the Greeks would probably provide a measure of discreet cooperation. Once a new Albanian regime is installed, they would try to establish influence over it.

6. ITALIAN POSITION

a. Like Greece and Yugoslavia, Italy has traditional ties and interests in Albania. Although largely economic, these interests conflict with those of the other two. Any change favorable to the others would be distasteful to Italy and would lead to deep resentment and eventual efforts to counteract the predominant influence and secure economic concessions.

b. Largely for temporary political and economic reasons, Italy is essentially inactive with reference to Albania at present. Except for the support of certain pro-Italian emigre groups, she is showing no evidence of any desire at this time to develop resources usable by her to promote a coup. However, she is aware of the active Yugoslav program of covert activities and is somewhat concerned over the possibility that the Yugoslavs may stage an attempt to bring the Albanian regime under their domination.

c. Undoubtedly Italy desires to see an Albania within the Italian sphere of political and economic influence, as during the period immediately preceding World War II. She would also like to see the elimination of the Soviet foothold on the Adriatic represented by the Hacha regime. Knowing that at this time the re-establishment of the old relationship toward Albania is impracticable, the Italians would probably consider an independent Albania friendly to the West as the best solution of the problem, and would be willing to cooperate discreetly toward that end. However, if it were obvious that any coup in the near future would play into Yugoslavia's hands because of the latter's strong position, Italy would probably incline to the short-sighted view that the weak, Soviet-dominated satellite is preferable to an expansion of Yugoslav-dominated territory on the Adriatic coast.

d. Of the three interested countries, i.e., Yugoslavia, Greece, and Italy, the latter has the least facilities at her disposal for intervening effectively in the Albanian scene, and is least feared by the Albanians themselves.

7. FRENCH POSITION

a. France has a general interest in Albania, as she has in the other Balkan countries, and maintains a legation there. This interest undoubtedly stems at least in part from her efforts to maintain her position as one of the principal Western powers. She can therefore be expected to make herself heard if any action to change the status quo begins or is threatened.

b. If an Albanian coup were precipitated without the knowledge of the French, it is probable that their reaction would be one of resentment, and they would accuse the initiators of reckless and provocative behavior which could bring about Soviet retaliation.

c. Basically, France would undoubtedly prefer to see an Albania of the type desired by the U. S., and except for fear of the uncertainties surrounding any change in the complicated Balkan situation, she would probably welcome a change.

8. SITUATION IN ALBANIA

a. Although universally hated by the general public, the Albanian government is able to maintain itself as a result of two major factors:

(1) An organized and effective security system based on ruthless police force and a widely developed system of informers.

(2) The successful propaganda campaign which had led a sizeable proportion of the population to believe that the Hoxha regime is the only force presently capable of preserving the current territorial boundaries of the country. Unless a revolution and a new regime are sponsored by the Americans, there is general fear that the country would be in danger of partitioning between the neighbors who have territorial designs, i.e., Greece and Yugoslavia.

b. Widespread public unrest, wretched economic conditions which are well below prewar levels, hostility to the Communist government, and disaffection among government employees serve to weaken the regime, and provide a favorable climate for revolt. Elements connected with the Communist Party, armed forces, and security forces are dissatisfied and susceptible to subversion. However, the security forces are able to control the sporadic and uncoordinated uprisings which occur occasionally, and it is unlikely that any successful internal coup can succeed without large-scale defections in the army and security forces. These forces, although not in themselves trustworthy, are still under the control of key government figures loyal to the regime, and are unlikely to revolt unless convinced that an insurrection would receive sufficient aid from outside to insure success, and that such success would not result in the substitution of Yugoslav, Greek, or Italian domination for Soviet Communist domination, but would lead to Albanian independence more or less guaranteed by covert American support of the coup followed by active aid and support from the West.

c. If convinced of massive material and political American backing, the Albanian people would rise against Hoxha with the assistance of the armed forces. The Yugoslavs appear to be aware of this fact, for in some of their attempts to recruit emigre leaders, they have sought to convey the impression that their schemes for the overthrow of Hoxha are being developed with the approval of the U. S.

9. CONCLUSIONS

a. In conclusion, it may be stated that, politically, conditions are ripe in Albania for the development of a revolutionary situation. The major obstacles are popular fear of repressive measures, of partitioning by the Yugoslavs and Greeks, and of conversion of the country to the status of a Yugoslav satellite. These obstacles would be overcome if the Albanian people were to believe that a revolution is supported by the U. S., alone or in conjunction with other Western countries, in such a manner as to preclude the development of predominant Yugoslav, Greek, or Italian influence in the resulting new state.

b. As regards the external political situation, each of the neighboring countries directly interested in Albania would like to establish a special privileged position to the exclusion of the others. Failing to do this, they would prefer an independent state detached from the Soviet Bloc, but fearing that such a condition cannot be realistically expected, they are disposed to take the short-sighted view that the status quo will at least insure a weak Albanian state which does not represent much of a threat to anyone at the moment and at the same time prevents all neighbors individually, or in combination, from attaining a favored position. With the covert participation of the U. S., and possibly Britain, as a stabilizing influence, all three rivals would be willing to consider a coup as conducive to a more desirable state of affairs.

c. Of the interested states, Yugoslavia is the strongest, best endowed for action in Albania, most active at present, most likely to undertake unilateral action to overthrow the regime, and inclined to be less amenable to U. S. influence on the matter than are Greece and Italy. Yugoslavia is therefore the key country in the Albanian picture. No attempt to execute a coup should be made unless Yugoslavia's cooperation, or at least benevolent neutrality, can be assured. Her resources are such that she could probably seriously hamper if not completely block an attempt to which she is not a party, and on the other hand, as a participant or a benevolent neutral, she could facilitate such an operation tremendously.

d. The U. S. would be placed in a difficult position if Yugoslavia were to move unilaterally. It would be impossible to sanction the move and at the same time, the move could not be hindered as it would be impossible to justify opposition to an attempt to detach a satellite from the Soviet Bloc.